What does the Matrix Convey about Reality?

The Matrix raises many questions about reality, what it is, and how we know that we are living in it. This movie suggests that we are living in a dream world, ‘The Matrix’, and what we know to be true isn’t. It plays at our emotions and our perception of life.

“You take the blue pill-the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill-you stay in Wonderland and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes.” Blue usually signifies cold or cool; a colour of safety and a haven from harm. By using the blue pill as a return to normal life, we are told the life we’re used to, is safe, safer than the red reality. Red on the other hand is used to inform people of more important things. It’s the colour used for stop signs, because it’s quite an alarming colour. It’s also used to show when something is hot, harmful or dangerous. In the context of the Matrix it is used to represent reality; the harsh but necessary reality.

There are a lot of echoes of the story ‘Alice in Wonderland’ in the matrix. The whole red pill-blue pill concept is based on the eat this-drink this concept in Alice in Wonderland. All the references to Wonderland emphasise the fact that the world Neo was living in before wasn’t real. As well as being used to describe the Matrix, Wonderland is also used to describe the real world. This implies that the real world, despite it being real and genuine, is still quite unbelievable and difficult to accept, like Wonderland.

In the movie, Neo mentions that sometimes he feels like he’s dreaming even when he’s awake. He has trouble distinguishing between his dreams and reality. This all happened while he was in the Matrix. Even when he thought he was awake he was still in the Matrix, and wasn’t experiencing reality. This shows us that even when something ‘feels’ real, doesn’t mean it is. Proving that one way of knowing on its own does not determine reality, it has to be a combination of all the ways of knowing. In order to make Neo believe in the Matrix Morpheus combined the ways of knowing. He launched him into the real world so that he can experience it for himself, using his senses. He combined this way of knowing with reason, when he told Neo about the coming of the chosen one and the Oracle.

For a long time reality has just been handed to us. We adopt our languages as well as our knowledge from older generations and our environment, so when a movie such as the Matrix comes along and challenges all we’ve ever known to be true, we begin to rethink our perception of reality. It’s no longer real simply because it feels that way. It becomes real because we reason with ourselves as well as others. It becomes real because we use our senses to determine its authenticity. The Matrix movie has indicated that we need to use all our ways of knowing in order to discover the true reality.